

**RESOLUTION NO. 12-571**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council and the Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama are apprised that a distinguished citizen, Mr. Melvin Ballard, a Montford Point Marine will be honored in a special Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony hosted by The Ballard Family at the home of Mrs. Ollye Ballard Conley, 1303 Governors Drive, Southeast, Huntsville, Alabama on Saturday, July 14, 2012; and,

**WHEREAS**, on the June 25, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order No. 8802 establishing the fair employment practice that began to erase discrimination in the Armed Forces; and,

**WHEREAS**, in 1942, President Roosevelt established a presidential directive giving African Americans an opportunity to be recruited into the Marine Corps. These African Americans from all states were not sent to the traditional boot camp of Parris Island, South Carolina and San Diego, California. Instead they were segregated, experiencing basic training at Montford Point, a facility at Camp LeJeune, North Carolina. Approximately 20,000 African Americans received basic training there between 1942 - 1949; and,

**WHEREAS**, Melvin was born on August 11, 1925 in Madison County, Alabama to the parents of William and Clara Moore Ballard. The family later moved to Limestone County on a small acreage of land owned by his parents. He worked hard on the farm and attended New Hope School; and,

**WHEREAS**, on December 9, 1943, he was drafted into the Marines. Upon completion of the physical examination in Tullahoma, Tennessee, he was sent to Nashville, Tennessee where he was officially inducted into the Marine Corps. After a fourteen day leave, he left for Camp Montford Point. He served from December 9, 1943 until May 14, 1946; and,

**WHEREAS**, Melvin returned home to work on the farm with his family. He was hired at Redstone Arsenal to work in the mailroom. He was later transferred to another position where he worked as a crane operator. Retiring in 1978, he took on a part-time job with North Alabama Moving Company; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Bill, S. 1527 and H.R. 2447 was signed on November 23, 2011 by President Obama, awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to the Marines stationed at Montford Point. This is the highest honor a civilian can receive. The official ceremony honoring the Montford Point Marines will be held in Washington, D.C. June 26 - 28, 2012; and,

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**WHEREAS**, due to health problems, Melvin will not be able to attend this historic celebration, therefore, a local ceremony was planned by family and friends and elected officials are invited to attend. In case of rain, the ceremony will be held on the second floor of the Huntsville Public Library.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the City Council and Mayor of the City of Huntsville, Alabama, gratefully acknowledge and congratulate Mr. Melvin Ballard, Montford Point Marine, recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal, and extend best wishes and success in all future endeavors.

**ADOPTED** this the 12th day of July, 2012

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President of the City Council of  
the City of Huntsville, Alabama

**APPROVED** this the 12th day of July, 2012.

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Mayor of the City of Huntsville,  
Alabama